2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

656
646

Permits to utilize municipal resources: to cut wood, pasture animals, and gather stones
Requests for certifications of birth, death, and marriage
Requests to register brands on cattle
Requests for marriage licenses
Permits to repair streets
Requests for *ejido* plots
Permits to pipe water to a house from the main line
Permits to dynamite rock

646
692
[691]

In addition to these routine functions, the local government, through the office of the *juez menor*, hears many complaints and quarrels. Complaints are usually first presented to the president, and he attempts to resolve the difficulty without recourse to the judge. The complaints most frequently heard by the president are given in the order of their frequency of occurrence.

Quarrels between neighbors about family matters
Litigations between neighbors over property matters
Quarrels due to drunkenness
Quarrels between neighbors over animals
Quarrels between husbands and wives
Quarrels because of damages caused by animals
Cases involving accusations of stealing of animals
Cases involving assault
Cases involving calumny
Charges of immorality
[847] Fraud
Infanticide

[681]

When the quarrel cannot be settled by the president, it is passed on to the local judge, and occasionally Tepoztecans are jailed. An analysis of the records of the local justice for 1920, 1927, 1935, 1941, 1942, and 1943 revealed the types and frequency of cases shown in Table 53.

674

The thing to be noted about these data is the relatively high incidence of crime. An analysis of the relative frequency of each type of case shows that five offenses—robbery, lesions and blows, injuries and threats, calumny or defamation, and damages—account for 73 per cent of the 808 cases recorded. It must be remembered that these data are only for reported cases. A large number of cases never reach the judge.

174

POLITICAL HISTORY

As has been noted earlier, recent archaeological work in Tepoztlán shows a continued occupation of some sites since the Archaic period.[1] This would place the age of these sites at about the time of Christ. The early ceramic horizons show eastern and southern influences, and the later horizons show northern influences from

[1] Muller, *Chimalacatlan*, p. 55. See also Appendix B, p. 433.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

tion, although very secretive, is not uncommon, and it is said that many women take medicine to make themselves sterile.

In sharp contrast to women, men in Tepoztlán prefer large families and are outspoken in their desire to have many sons to help them. In many husband-wife relations there is an underlying struggle in which the wife tries to limit the number of pregnancies against the protests of her husband. If conception does not take place within a reasonable length of time, husbands may suspect their wives of taking medicine to prevent it. Failure to conceive may be sufficient cause for abandonment, and in the few cases in which women were known to have prayed for a child the motive almost always was to please the husband. Men show little interest in learning methods of birth control, and it is highly improbable that many husbands would practice it or permit their wives to.

The differences in the attitudes of men and women toward having children stem from several factors. Men often marry at a more mature age and when they feel ready for marriage, but girls marry quite young, and often as a result of pressure from their suitors or their parents or because of pregnancy. Men frequently marry for the purpose of raising a family; women, except when they are pregnant, usually marry for motives entirely unrelated to having children. Unlike women, who become more dependent upon their mother-in-law and husband at the birth of a child, men acquire a new independence and a more respected status as *padre de familia*. Becoming a mother does not in itself improve a woman's status, nor is there any perceptible change in the treatment of wives during pregnancy. As one informant put it, "A good husband will continue to be good when his wife is pregnant, and a bad one will continue to beat her."

The strict division of labor in Tepoztecan homes, in which the burden of the care of the children in sickness and in health falls upon the mother, is often given as an explanation of the different attitudes of men and women toward having children. "It makes no difference to the men how many children there are. It is the wife who has to see that there is enough for all."

Motherhood is not glorified in Tepoztlán. The prevailing prudishness toward sex, as well as the reciprocal respect-relations between parents and children, results in the avoidance of the subject. Most Tepoztecan girls grow up in an atmosphere in which negative attitudes of fear and shame toward motherhood, pregnancy, and even marriage have more opportunity of developing than positive ones. Despite the early assumption of the care of small children and household duties, there is an absence of positive psychological preparation in the training of young girls for the acceptance of motherhood. This is reenforced by the martyr-like attitude of their own mothers toward husbands and children.

PREGNANCY

The most common expression to describe pregnancy is "to become ill with child." Sterility (*yomitztli*) is thought to be due to "cold" in the womb,[2] and massages

[2] Sterility is also explained by "cold" in Chan Kom. *Ibid.* p. 181.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948) 1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

There is a belief that if an eclipse occurs during a woman's pregnancy, the child will be born with some part of his body missing; that is, it will have been eaten by the moon. To prevent this the mother should wear a pair of scissors under her sash. An earthquake will also cause some physical defect in the child.

There are no diet restrictions for pregnant women. There is a widespread belief that the pregnant woman should satisfy any food whim, otherwise she may suffer a miscarriage or a premature birth, or the baby may be born with skin colorations. Many subsequent difficulties are assigned to the failure to satisfy food whims. It is the husband's obligation to provide his wife with the food she wishes. But women do not make frequent or unreasonable demands, particularly if their husbands are not "good" to them.

Women who are nauseated during the second and third months are treated with herbs which are said to decrease the water in the abdomen. Many women do not take this treatment because of the restriction in diet and movement that follows. They may not go out into the street for three days, they may not go to the fields or to the stream, they may not stand near a water jug.

There are no restrictions on sexual intercourse during pregnancy, and many continue to have intercourse up to the time of birth. No special positions are used in the last months to protect the fetus.

When there are signs of miscarriage, the midwife tries several remedies. The patient may be asked to recline on a *rebozo* or cloth and is then moved or jerked two or three times from one side to another by means of the cloth. Another remedy is to soak an old tortilla in water of *nixtamal* or vinegar and place it on the small of the back. A mixture of the following herbs is also used: *tlatlazcametl*,[6] *camotito de San Diego*,[7] and *muicle*.[8] To this some midwives add wine, chocolate, leaves of *Santa María* (*artemisa*),[9] and a gold earring to be boiled with the mixture. Miscarriages are not frequent, and when one occurs the woman is often blamed for bringing it about by carelessness.

Induced miscarriages are fairly common. But the frequent deaths in such cases deter most women, and it is said that women who try to "cure" themselves will have to account for their behavior on Judgment Day. Miscarriages are said to cause *paños* or brown discoloration of the skin, so that women who suffer from this are believed to have aborted frequently. To bring on delayed menstruation, many women drink *muicle*. Ground *chayotillos* with salt may be taken, or a tuber *aboyote* may be used. Another way is to use the same preparation which brings on labor. The ingredients are as follows: opossum tail (*tlacuache*), *pimienta gorda*, *zasalik*, and *tlatlazcametl*. Sometimes women will bring about a miscarriage by deliberately lifting heavy objects. Many women, and particularly unmarried girls, secretly go to

[6] *Montanoa tomentosa*, a very well-known plant. See Maximiano Martínez, *Las Plantas Medicinales de México* (México, D. F.: México Ediciones Botas, 1939), p. 330.

[7] Unidentified.

[8] *Jacobinia spicigera*, *ibid.*

[9] Unidentified.

2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

curanderos in other villages to "cure" themselves. However, the only approved method of limiting the number of pregnancies is to avoid intercourse as long as possible after the birth of a child.

BIRTH

When the baby is expected, a curtain is hung to screen the bed of the expectant mother, and delivery takes place behind this. Poorer families hang up a *petate*. When labor pains begin, the midwife is called. Occasionally the husband will assist the wife, but the majority of women are embarrassed by his presence and insist that he leave. One of the underlying beliefs throughout the delivery is that difficulty is due to "cold" and that "heat" must be applied. The patient lies on a *petate* on the floor, and the midwife massages the abdomen, the back, and the hips, with various heated oils and unguents. These may be oil of violet, white lily, rosemary or almonds, or *altea*, depending upon the midwife. The heat and the massage is to warm the infant, loosen it, and make it slip out more easily.

The patient is then given a mixture of *tlatlaxcamelt* with chocolate, sherry, and egg, to make the labor pains stronger, or *pimienta gorda* is boiled and given. The abdomen is massaged and rubbed all the while, and the mother is wrapped in a blanket to make her perspire. A *cenidor*, or sash, may be tightly bound around the waist at this time to keep the back from weakening and the bones from spreading and to prevent hemorrhage later. The patient may kneel at this stage, and the baby is delivered on the *petate* and wrapped by the midwife in a clean, warmed, old cloth. If it is a dry birth, the mother is given more *tlatlaxcamelt*. In cases of difficult or delayed births, the family, at the suggestion of the midwife, may buy a candle for the Virgen de Monserrat, the guardian of pregnant women. The patient measures four fingers on the candle, a mark is made at that point with a centavo, and the candle is put before the image. If delivery does not occur before the flame reaches the mark on the candle, the case is considered very grave.

Delayed births are sometimes attributed to the fact that the woman does not bear down at the proper time, and attempts are made to eject the child by provoking nausea and vomiting. This may be achieved by putting a chicken feather or the tail of an opossum into the woman's mouth.[10] The tail is sometimes cooked and given as a drink. The woman may also be given her husband's urine or the dirty soapy water in which he has washed his hands. It is believed that when a woman in labor breathes out or screams every time she feels pain, the child rises instead of descends. The mother is given something to bite on, usually her braid, and is told to keep her mouth closed. Even speaking is discouraged. It may be such practices, found in many parts of Mexico, which have led observers to describe Mexican Indian women as stoical during childbirth. In Tepoztlán, women frequently pray and scream when they suffer severe pains, and only the *más valientas* are quiet.

Difficult births and extended labor, sometimes over several days, are not uncom-

[10] In Tzintzuntzan, the woman's braid is forced down her throat.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

171 [843] [847] pec, a metal object is also worn for protection during an eclipse. The use of herbs and other remedies to produce abortions is also reported for Tzintzuntzan, Cherán, Mitla, and Tehuantepec. In Chan Kom a partition is put up in the room before delivery. The use of prenatal and postnatal massage, and during delivery, is mentioned in the monographs on Tzintzuntzan, Cherán, Chan Kom, and Tehuantepec. In Mitla the flow of blood after birth is encouraged by an herbal preparation. The application of heat during a difficult delivery is mentioned in Tzintzuntzan, Cherán, and Chan Kom. Putting the mother on a blanket to hasten the birth occurs in Tzintzuntzan, Cherán, and Mitla; the inducement of vomiting for the same reason is practiced in Tzintzuntzan and Tehuantepec. In Cherán, Mitla, and Chan Kom certain drinks are given which probably result in vomiting, but this is not specifically stated by the authors.

171 844 [845]

[846] The use of sweatbaths during confinement is common in Mitla, and small infants are also sometimes so bathed. Hot tallow is dropped on the umbilicus in Tzintzuntzan and Tehuantepec, and the umbilical cord is used as a remedy for sore eyes in Mitla. In Cherán lemon juice is dropped into the infant's eyes. Finally, the burying of the after-birth under the hearth is practiced in Tzintzuntzan, Cherán, and Chan Kom. In Mitla and Tehuantepec it is buried elsewhere. In Tehuantepec the mother is bound and a "doll" is placed over the abdomen, to prevent the "matrix from falling out of place."

171 846 A comparison of the period of postnatal confinement, which is so important in Tepoztlán, also shows some similarity. In Tzintzuntzan and Cherán, some share the widespread belief that women should not go out or resume work until after forty days. But a woman in Tzintzuntzan may sit up in bed after three days and often goes out after three weeks. In Cherán a mother stays in bed from eight to fifteen days and may leave the house after twenty days. In Mitla there is no set confinement period, but it is usually not longer than fifteen days. In Chan Kom, the mother "must stay in her hammock for a week, remain quiet for two weeks, and after three weeks she may go out into the street." [16] In Tehuantepec the midwife visits the mother in seven days, and the mother goes to *sacamisa* in forty days.

171 64 It is difficult to say to what extent these similarities are due to contacts between these groups before the Conquest, or to the common exposure to Spanish colonial influences. A full comparison of our material on Tepoztlán with that of the foregoing groups is not always easy or possible because of the unequal coverage and treatment of the material. For the same reason, it is difficult to compare the psychological significance of practices that appear similar.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 183.